

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-12 are presently pending in this application, Claims 1-8 having been amended, and Claims 9-12 having been newly added by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by JP 07-282468 (hereinafter "JP '468").

Claims 1-6 and 8 have been amended solely for clarification. These claim amendments are believed to be merely cosmetic and thus are not believed to narrow the scopes of the claims. If, however, the Examiner disagrees, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned who will be happy to work in a joint effort to derive mutually satisfactory claim language. Furthermore, the amendments to Claim 7 are believed to find clear support in the claims, specification and drawings as originally filed.<sup>1</sup> Newly added Claims 9-12 are also believed to be supported by the original disclosure, for example, original Claims 1, 5 and 7, respectively. Hence, no new matter is believed to be added thereby.

Briefly recapitulating, Claim 1 as currently amended is directed to a method for preparing an optical information medium including a supporting substrate having a center hole, an information recording area provided thereon, and a light-transmitting layer including a resin layer formed on the information recording area through which recording/reading laser beam is transmitted, and the method includes feeding a coating fluid containing an actinic radiation-curable resin onto the supporting substrate, rotating the supporting substrate so as to spread the coating fluid over the supporting substrate and form the resin layer, and irradiating the resin layer with actinic radiation to cure the resin layer while reducing a rotation speed of the supporting substrate.

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Specification, Figure 11.

By irradiating the resin layer while reducing the rotation speed, cured resin in the resin layer receives less centrifugal force, and thus the outward movement of the cured resin is suppressed. Hence, cured resin is less likely to form a raised area in the outer peripheral region of the resin layer or resin icicles extending radially outward from the outer peripheral edge of the supporting substrate.<sup>2</sup>

JP '468 discloses an optical disk, but fails to teach "irradiating the resin layer with actinic radiation to cure said resin layer while reducing a rotation speed of the supporting substrate" as recited in amended Claim 1. On the other hand, JP '468 simply discloses an optical disk having the protective coating layer 3 formed by a spin coating method,<sup>3</sup> and does not disclose or even suggest changing the rotation speed in the process of curing the resin. Therefore, the method recited in Claim 1 is believed to be clearly distinguishable from JP '468.

Turning now to Claim 5, amended Claim 5 is directed to an optical information medium including a supporting substrate having a center hole, an information recording area provided on the supporting substrate, and a light-transmitting layer formed on the information recording area through which recording/reading laser beam is transmitted, the light-transmitting layer including a recess at a position outside of the information recording area and a bump formed on the supporting substrate outside of the recess. By providing a light-transmitting layer having such a recess and a bump, the optical information medium of Claim 5 experiences less deflection and less axial runout in the outer peripheral region.<sup>4</sup>

The outstanding Office Action asserts that JP '468 discloses an optical information medium as recited in Claim 5. However, JP '468 is not believed to teach "a light-transmitting layer formed on the information recording area through which recording/reading laser beam

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<sup>2</sup> Id., page 9, line 10, to page 10, line 21.

<sup>3</sup> JP '468, Abstract and Figure 3.

<sup>4</sup> Specification, page 15, lines 6-16.

is transmitted, the light-transmitting layer including a recess at a position outside of the information recording area and a bump formed on the supporting substrate outside of the recess” as recited in amended Claim 5. In contrast, JP ‘468 merely discloses the optical disk including *a substrate with a hollow groove*, not a light-transmitting layer including a recess and a bump. Therefore, the structure recited in Claim 5 is believed to be clearly distinguishable from JP ‘468.

Likewise, independent Claim 7 as currently amended is believed to include subject matter substantially similar to what is recited in Claim 5 to the extent discussed above. Thus, Claim 7 is also believed to be distinguishable from JP ‘468.

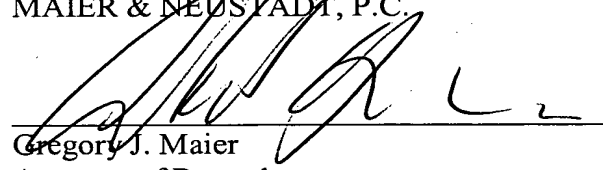
For the foregoing reasons, Claims 1, 5 and 7 are believed to be allowable. Furthermore, since Claims 2-4, 6 and 8-12 depend from one of Claims 1, 5 and 7, substantially the same arguments set forth above also apply to these dependent claims. Hence, Claims 2-4, 6 and 8-12 are believed to be allowable as well.

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In view of the amendments and discussions presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an early action favorable to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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